

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An optical component, comprising one or more ~~retarder(s) in which is/are embedded~~ retarders having embedded therein a plurality of images, the images being so arranged that, at any point in the plane of the component, an element of not more than one image is present, each image ~~being associated~~ being associated with a different interaction with ~~polarised~~ polarized light.

2. (Currently Amended) An optical component according to Claim 1, wherein there is a plurality of retarders in which the images are embedded, wherein the retarders ~~having~~ each independently have the same or different retardation values  $\Delta n d$ .

3. (Currently Amended) An optical component, according to Claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the images are embedded in one or more retarder(s) having specific image patterns, each having a different optical axis from the other specific image patterns.

4. (Currently Amended) An optical component according to ~~any preceding~~ Claim 1, wherein the respective images are contained in alternate areas.

5. (Currently Amended) An optical component according to ~~any preceding Claim~~ Claim 1, wherein the respective images are contained in successive optionally parallel stripes.

6. (Currently Amended) An optical component according to Claim 4 or 5, wherein the areas or stripes are smaller or narrower than the eye can resolve, ~~enabling an optical component~~ and wherein one or more image(s) is/are (a) photographic image(s).

7. (Currently Amended) An optical component according to Claim ~~4, 5 or 6~~ 4 or 5, wherein there are ~~n images~~ images, each respectively being represented on every nth stripe or nth area.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~Element~~ An element for protection against forgery and/or copying, ~~characterized by which comprises~~ which comprises an optical component according to ~~any one preceding Claims~~ Claim 1.

9. (Currently Amended) A viewing system, comprising a source of ~~polarised~~ polarized light, an optical component according to ~~any preceding Claim~~ Claim 1, through which component the ~~polarised~~ polarized light can travel, and an ~~analyser~~ analyzer for light which has traversed the optical component, that ~~analyser~~ analyzer being rotatable about the axis of the direction of travel of the light; whereby, by rotating the ~~analyser~~ analyzer, peaks of maximum contrasts for each image are obtained at specific rotation angles of the ~~analyser~~ analyzer, enabling, at each such angle, ~~visualisation~~ visualization of a respective image not otherwise visible.

10. (Currently Amended) A system according to Claim 8 ~~9~~, wherein the source of ~~polarised~~ polarized light is a ~~polarising~~ polarizing sheet applied to the surface of the component.

11. (Currently Amended) A system ~~accorded~~ according to Claim ~~or 10~~ 9, wherein the ~~analyser~~ analyzer is a ~~polarising~~ polarizing sheet.

12. (Currently Amended) A viewing system, comprising a reflector ~~which~~ that maintains the ~~polarisation~~ polarization direction of incident light, an optical element according to ~~Claims 1 to 7~~ Claim 1 attached to said reflector, and a ~~polariser~~ polarizer ~~which~~ that is rotatable about the axis of the direction of travel of the light, such that light which has traversed the ~~polariser~~ polarizer and the optical component is reflected at said reflector and traverses a second time the optical component and said ~~polariser~~ polarizer; whereby, by rotating said ~~polariser~~ polarizer, peaks of maximum contrasts for each image are obtained at specific rotation angles of the ~~polariser~~ polarizer, enabling, at each such angle, ~~visualization~~ visualization of a respective image not otherwise visible.

13. (New) An optical component according to Claim 2, wherein the images are embedded in the retarders having specific image patterns, each having a different optical axis from the other specific image patterns.

14. (New) An optical component according to Claim 6, wherein there are  $n$  images, each respectively being represented on every  $n$ th stripe or  $n$ th area.